



M^{rs} Jordan as Nell.



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THE
DEVIL TO PAY;
OR,
The Wives Metamorphos'd.

A N . O P E R A .

TAKEN FROM THE
MANAGER'S BOOK,

AT THE

Theatre Royal in Drury-Lane.

L O N D O N :

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DRURY-LANE.

M E N.

Sir John Loverule	—	Mr. Kelly.
Butler	—	Mr. Williames.
Conjuror	—	Mr. Benson.
Jobson	—	Mr. Moody.

W O M E N.

Lady Loverule	—	Mrs. Ward.
Lucy	—	Miss Davis.
Lettice	—	Miss Tidswell.
Nell	—	Miss Jordan.

THE DEVIL TO PAY.

SCENE I. *The Cobler's house.*

Jobson and Nell.

Nell. **P**RYTHEE, good Jobson, stay with me to-night, and for once make merry at home.

Job. Peace, peace, you jade, and go spin; for if I lack any thread for my stitching, I will punish you by virtue of my sovereign authority.

Nell. Ay marry, no doubt of that; whilst you take your swing at the alehouse, spend your substance, get as drunk as a beast, then come home like a fox, and use one like a dog.

Job. Nounz! do you prate? Why, how now, brazen face, do you speak ill of the government? Don't you know, hussy, that I am king in my own house, and that this is treason against my majesty.

Nell. Did ever one hear such stuff? But I pray you now, Jobson, don't go to the alehouse to night.

Job. Well, I'll humour you for once, but don't grow saucy upon't; for I'm invited by Sir John Loverule's butler, and am to be princely drunk with punch at the hall place, we shall have a bowl large enough to swim in.

Nell. But they say, husband, the new lady will not suffer a stranger to enter her doors; she grudges even a draught of small-beer to her own servants; and several of the tenants have come home with broken heads from her ladyship's own hands, only for smelling strong beer in the house.

Job. A pox on her for a fanatical jade! She has almost distracted the good knight: but she's now abroad feasting with her relations, and will scarce come home to-night; and we are to have much drink, a fiddle, and merry gambols.

Nell. O dear husband, let me go with you, we'll be as merry as the night's long.

Job. Why how now, you bold baggage! would you be carried to a company of smooth-fac'd, eating, drinking, lazy serving-men; no, no, you jade, I'll not be a cuckold.

Nell. I'm sure they would make me welcome; you promis'd I should see the house, and the family has not

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been here before, since you marry'd and brought me home.

Job. Why, thou most audacious strumpet, dar'st thou dispute with me, thy lord and master? Get in and spin, or else my strap shall wind about thy ribs most cofoundedly.

He that has the best wife,
 She's the plague of his life;
 But for her who will scold and will quarrel,
 Let him cut her off short
 Of her meat and her sport,
 And ten times a day hoop her barrel, brave boys,
 And ten times a day hoop her barrel.

Nell. Well, we poor women must always be slaves, and never have any joy; but you men run and ramble at your pleasure.

Job. Why, you most pestilent baggage, will you be hoop'd? Be gone.

Nell. I must obey.

[*Going.*

Job. Say! now I thi k on't, here's six-pence for you, get ale and apples, stretch and puff thyself up with lambs wool, rejoice and revel by thyself, be drunk and wallow in thy own fly, like a grumbling sow as thou art.

He that has the best wife,
 She's the plague of his life, &c.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. Sir John's.

Butler, Cook, Footman, Coachman, Lucy, Lettice, Butler.

Jobson. I would the blind fiddler and our dancing neighbours were here, that we might rejoice a little, while our termagant lady is abroad; I have made a most sovereign bowl of punch.

Lucy. We had need rejoice sometimes, for our devilish new lady will never suffer it in her hearing.

But. I will maintain, there is more mirth in a galley, than in our family; Our master indeed is the worthiest gentleman—nothing but sweetness and liberality.

Foot. But here's a house turn'd topsy turvy, from heaven to hell, since she came hither.

Lucy. His former lady was all virtue and mildness.

But. Aye, rest her soul, she was so; but this is inspirited with a legion of devils, who make her lay about her like a fury.

Lucy. I am sure I always feel her in my bones: if her complexion don't please her, or she looks yellow in a morning,

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morning, I am sure to look black and blue for it before night.

Cook. Pox on her! I dare not come within her reach. I have some six broken heads already. A lady, quotha! a she-bear is a civiler animal.

Foot. Heaven help my poor master! this devilish termagant scolding woman will be the death of him; I never saw a man so alter'd in all the days of my life.

Cook. There's a perpetual motion in that tongue of her's, and a damn'd shrill pipe, enough to break the drum of a man's ear.

Enter Blind Fiddler, Jobson, and Neighbours.

But. Welcome, welcome all; this is our wish. Hottest old acquaintance, goodman Jobson! how dost thou?

Job. By my troth, I am always sharp set towards punch, and am now come with a firm resolution, tho' but a poor cobbler, to be as richly drunk as a lord; I am a true English heart, and look upon drunkenness as the best part of the liberty of the subject.

But. Come, Jobson, we'll bring out our bowl of punch in solemn procession; and then for a song to crown our happiness. [*They go out, and return with a bowl of punch.*]

Come jolly Bacchus, god of wine,

Crown this night with pleasure;

Let none at cares of life repine,

To destroy our pleasure:

Fill up the mighty sparkling bowl,

That ev'ry true and loyal soul

May drink and sing without controul,

To support our pleasure.

Thus, mighty Bacchus, shalt thou be

Guardian of our treasure;

That under thy protection we

May enjoy new pleasure.

And as the hours glide away,

We'll in thy name invoke their stay,

And sing thy praises that we may

Live and die with pleasure.

But: The king and the royal family in a brimmer—

Here's a good health to the king,

And send him a prosperous reign;

O'er hills and high mountains,

We'll drink dry the fountains,

Until the sun rises again, brave boys,

Until the sun rises again.

Then

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Then here's to thee my boy boon,
 And here's to thee, my boy boon ;
 As we've tarry'd all day
 For to drink down the sun,
 So we'll tarry and drink down the moon, brave boys,
 So we'll tarry and drink down the moon. [*Omnes huzza!*
Enter Sir John and Lady.

Lady. O heaven and earth ! What's here within my doors ? Is hell broke loose ? What troop of friends are here ? Sirrah, you impudent rascal, speak !

Sir John. For shame, my dear. — As this is a time of mirth and jollity, it has always been the custom of my house, to give my servants liberty in this season, and to treat my country neighbours, that with innocent sports they may divert themselves.

Lady. I say, meddle with your own affairs, I will govern my own house without your putting in an oar. Shall I ask you leave to correct my own servants ?

Sir John. I thought, madam, this had been my house, and these my tenants and servants.

Lady. Did I bring a fortune to be thus abus'd and snub'd before people ? Do you call my authority in question, ungrateful man ? Look you to your dogs and horses abroad, but it will be my province to govern here ; nor will I be controul'd by e'er a hunting, hawking-knight in Christendom.

Sir John. Ye gods ! you gave to me a wife,
 Out of your grace and favour,
 To be the comfort of my life,
 And I was glad to have her ;
 But if your providence divin-
 For greater blifs design her,
 To obey your wills at any time,
 I am ready to resign her.

This it is to be married to a continual tempest ; strife and noise, canting, and hypocrisy, are eternally afloat — 'Tis impossible to bear it long.

Lady. Ye filthy scoundrels, and odious jades, I'll teach you to junket thus, and steal my provisions ; I shall be devour'd at this rate.

But. I thought, madam, we might be merry once upon a holiday

Lady. Holiday, you popish cur ! is one day more holy than another ? and if it be, you'll be sure to get drunk upon it, you rogue. [*Beats him.*] You minx,
 you

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you impudent flirt, are you jiggling it after an abominable fiddle? all dancing is whorish, hussy. [*Lugs her by the ears.*]

Lucy. O lud! she has pull'd off both my ears.

Sir John. Pray, madam, consider your sex and quality! I blush for your behaviour.

Lady. Consider your Incapacity: you shall not instruct me. Who are you, thus muffled, you buzzard?

[*She beats 'em all, Jobson stals by.*]

Job. I am an honest, plain, psalm-singing cobbler, madam; if your ladyship would but go to church, you might hear me above all the rest there.

Lady. I'll try thy voice here first, villain. [*Strikes him.*]

Job. Nounz! what a Pox, what a devil ails you?

Lady. O profane wretch! wicked varlet!

Sir John. For shame! your behaviour is monstrous!

Lady. Was ever poor lady so miserable in a brutish husband as I am? I that am so pious and so religious a woman!

Job. Sings. He that has the best wife,
She's the plague of his life,

But for her that will scold and will quarrel— [*Exit.*]

Lady. O rogue, scoundrel, villain!

Sir John. Remember modesty.

Lady. I'll rout you all with a vengeance—I'll spoil your squeaking treble. [*Beats the fiddler.*]

Fid. O murder, murder! I am a dark man—which way shall I get hence?—Oh heaven! She has broke my fiddle, and undone me and my wife and children.

Sir John. Here, poor fellow, take your staff and be gone: There's money to buy you two such; that's your way. [*Exit fiddler.*]

Lady. Methinks you are very liberal, sir; must my estate maintain you in your profuseness.

Sir John. Go up to your closet, pray, and compose your mind.

Lady. O wicked man! to bid me pray.

Sir John. A man can't be compleatly curst, I see, without marriage; but since there is such a thing as separate maintenance, she shall to-morrow enjoy the benefit of it.

Of the states in life so various,

Marriage, sure, is most precarious;

'Tis a maze so strangely winding,

Still we are new mazes finding;

'Tis an action so severe,

That nought but death can set us clear:

Happy's

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Happy's the man, from wedlock free,
Who knows to prize his liberty.

Were men wary,
How they marry,

We should not be by half so full of misery.

[*Knocking.*] Here, where are my servants? Must they be frightened from me?—Within there—see who knocks.

Lady. Within there—Where are my fluts? Ye drabs, ye queans—lights there. *Enter Servants.*

But. Sir, it is the doctor that lives ten miles off; he practises physic, and is an astrologer; your worship knows him very well; he is a cunning man, makes almshouses, and can help people to their goods again.

Enter Doctor.

Doct. Sir, I humbly beg your honour's pardon for this unseasonable intrusion; but I am benighted, and it is so dark that I can't possibly find my way home; and knowing your worship's hospitality, desire the favour to be harboured under your roof to night.

Lady. Out of my house, you lewd conjurer, you magician.

Doct. Here's a turn!—Here's a change!—Well, if I have any art, ye shall smart for this. *[Aside.]*

Sir John. You see, friend, I am not master of my own house; therefore, to avoid any uneasiness, go down the lane about a quarter of a mile, and you'll see a cobbler's cottage; stay there a little, and I'll send my servant to conduct you to a tenant's house, where you'll be well entertained.

Doct. I thank you, sir; I'm your most humble servant—But as for your lady there, she shall this night feel my resentment. *[Aside.]*

Sir John. Come, madam, you and I must have some conference together.

Lady. Yes; I will have a conference and a reformation too in this house, or I'll turn it upside down—I will!

Sir John. Grant me ye pow's but this request,
And let who will the world contest;
Convey her to some distant shore,
Where I may ne'er behold her more;
Or let me to some cottage fly,
In Freedom's arms to live and die.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE

SCENE III. *The Cobbler's. Nell and the Doctor.*

Nell. Pray, sir, mend your draught, if you please; you are very welcome, sir.

Doct. Thank you heartily, good woman; and to requite your civility, I'll tell you your fortune.

Nell. O, pray do, sir; I never had my fortune told me in my life.

Doct. Let me behold the lines of your face;

Nell. I'm afraid, sir, 'tis none of the cleanest, I have been about dirty work all this day.

Doct. Come, come, 'tis a good face; be not ashamed of it, you shall shew it in greater places suddenly.

Nell. O dear sir, I shall be mightily ashamed; I want dacity when I come before great folks.

Doct. You must be confident, and fear nothing; there is much happiness attends you.

Nell. Oh me! this is a rare man; heav'n be thank'd!

Doct. To-morrow before the sun rise you shall be the happiest woman in this country.

Nell. How, by to-morrow! alack a-day! sir, how can that be.

Doct. No more shall you be troubled with a surly husband that rails at, and straps you.

Nell. Lud! how came he to know that? he must be a conjurer! indeed my husband is somewhat rugged, and in his cups will beat me, but it is not much: he's an honest pains-taking man, and I let him have his way. Pray, sir, take t'other cup of ale.

Doct. I thank you—believe me, to-morrow you shall be the richest woman i' th' hundred, and ride in your own coach.

Nell. O father! you jeer me.

Doct. By my art, I do not. But mark my words, be confident, and bear all out, or worse will follow.

Nell. Never fear, sir, I warrant you.—O gemini! a coach!

Nell. My swelling heart now leaps for joy,
And riches all my thoughts employ;
No more shall people call me Nell,
Her ladyship will do as well:
Deck'd in my golden rich array,
I'll in my chariot roll away,
And shine at ring, at ball, and play.

Enter Jobson.

Job. Where is this quean? Here, Nell! what a pox, are you

you drunk with your lamb's wool?

Nell. O husband! here's the rarest man——he has told me my fortune.

Job. Has he so! and planted my fortune too, a lusty pair of horns upon my head—Eh,—It's not so?

Doct. Thy wife is a virtuous woman, and thou'lt be happy——

Job. Come out, you hang dog, you jugler, you cheating, bamboozling villain, must I be cuckolded by such rogues as you are, mackmaticians, and almanack makers?

Nell. Pr'ythe peace, husband; we shall be rich, and have a coach of our own.

Job. A coach! a cart, a wheel-barrow, you jade—By the mackin, she's drunk, bloody drunk, most confoundedly drunk—Get you to bed, you trumpet. [*Beats her.*]

Nell. O mercy on us! Is this a taste of my good fortune?

Doct. You had better not have touch'd her, you surly rogue.

Job. Out of my house, you villain, or I'll run my awl up to the handle in your buttocks.

Doct. Farewel, you paltry slave.

Job. Get out, you rogue.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV. *Changes to an open country.*

Doct. My little spirits, now appear,
Nadir and Abishog draw near.
The time is short, make no delay,
Then quickly haste and come away
Nor moon nor stars afford their light,
But all is wrapt in gloomy night:
Both men and beast to rest incline,
And all things favour my design.

Spirits. [*within*] *Say master, what is to be done.*

Doct. My strict commands be sure attend,
For, ere this night shall have an end,
You must this cobbler's wife transform,
And to the knight's the like perform.
With all your most specific charms,
Convey each wife to different arms;
Let the delusion be so strong,
That none may know the right from wrong.

Within. { All this we will with care perform,
In thunder, lightning, and a storm.

[*Thunder.*]

SCENE

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SCENE, Jobson at work, the bed in view.

WHAT devil has been abroad to-night? I never heard such claps of thunder in my life. I thought my little hovel would have flown away; but now all is clear again, and a fine star-light morning it is. I'll settle myself to work. They say winter's thunder is summer's wonder.

Of all the trades from east to west,
The cobbler's past contending,
Is like in time to prove the best,
Which every day is mending:
How great his praise who can amend
The soles of all his neighbours,
Nor is unmindful of his end,
But to his last still labours.

Lady. Heyday! what impudent ballad-singing rogue is that, who dares wake me out of my sleep? I'll have you dead, you rascal.

Job. What a pox, does she talk in her sleep? or is she drunk still? [Sings.]

In Both a wanton wife did dwell,
As Chaucer he doth write,
Who wantonly did spend her time
In many a fond delight.
All on a time so sick she was,
And she at length did die,
And then her soul at Paradise
Did knock most mightily.

Lady. Why, villain, rascal, screech-owl, who makest a worse noise than a dog hung in the pales, or a hog in a high wind. Where are all my servants? Somebody come and hamstring this rogue. [Knocks.]

Job. Why, how now, you brazen quean! You must get drunk with the conjurer, must you? I'll give you money another time to spend in lamb's-wool, you saucy jade, shall I?

Lady. Monstrous! I can find no bell to ring. Where are my servants? They shall toss him in a blanket.

Job. Ay, the jade's asleep still; the conjurer told her she should keep her coach, and she is dreaming of her equipage. [Sings:]

I will come in, in spite, she said,
Of all such churls as thee;
Thou art the cause of all our pain,
Our grief and misery.

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Thou

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Thou first broke the commandement,
 In honour of thy wife :
 When Adam heard her say these words,
 He ran away for life.

Lady. Why husband ! Sir John ! will you suffer me to be thus insulted ?

Job. Husband ! Sir John ! what a pox, has she knighted me ? And my name's Zekel too ; a good jest faith.

Lady. Ha ! he's gone, he is not in the bed Heaven ! where am I ! Foh ! what loathsome smells are here ! Canvas sheets, and a filthy ragged curtain, a beaſtly rug, and a flock bed. Am I awake, or is it all a dream ? What rogue is that ? Sirrah ! where am I ? who brought me hither ? What rascal are you ?

Job. This is amazing——I never heard ſuch words from her before.—If I take my ſtrap to you, I'll make you know your husband ; I'll teach you better manners, you ſaucy drab.

Lady. Oh aſtoniſhing impudence ! You my husband, ſirrah ? I'll have you hang'd, you rogue ; I'm a Lady. Let me know who has given me a ſleeping draught, and conveyed me hither, you dirty varlet ?

Job. A ſleeping draught ! yes, you drunken jade, you had a ſleeping draught, with a pox to ye. What, has not your lamb's-wool done working yet ?

Lady. Where am I ? Where has my villainous husband put me ? Lucy ! Lettice ! Where are my queans ?

Job. Ha, ha, ha ! What ſhe call her maids too ? The conjurer has made her mad as well as drunk.

Lady. He talks of conjurers ; ſure I am bewitched ! Ha ! what cloaths are here ? a linſey-woolſey gown, a calico hood, a red baiſe petticoat ! I am removed from my own houſe by witchcraft. What muſt I do ? What will become of me ?

[*Horn winds without.*]

Job. Hark ! the hunters and the merry horns are abroad. Why, Nell, you lazy jade, 'tis break of day ; to work, to work, come, and ſpin, you drab, or I'll tan your hide for you. What a pox, muſt I be at work two hours before you in the morning ?

Lady. Why, ſirrah, thou impudent villain, doſt thou not know me, you rogue ?

Job. Know you ! yes, I know you well enough, and I'll make you know me before I have done with you.

Lady. I am Sir John Loverule's Lady ; how came I here ?

Job.

Job. Sir John Loverule's lady! No, Nell; not quite so bad neither; that damn'd stingy, fanatick whore, plagues every one that comes near her—the whole country curses her.

Lady. Nay then I'll hold no longer—you rogue, you insolent villain, I'll teach you better manners.

[Flings the bed-staff and other things at him.]

Job. This is more than ever I saw by her, I never had an ill word from her before. Come, strap, I'll try your mettle; I'll sober you, I warrant you, quean.

[He straps her—she flies at him.]

Lady. I'll pull your throat out; I'll tear out your eyes; I am a lady, sirrah. O murder! murder! Sir John Loverule will hang you for this. Murder, murder!

Job. Come, huffy, leave fooling, and come to your spinning, or else I'll lamb you, you never were so lamb'd since you were an inch long. Take it up, you jade.

[Straps her.]

Lady. Hold! hold! I'll do any thing.

Job. Oh! I thought I should bring you to yourself again.

Lady. What shall I do? I can't spin.

[Aside.]

Job. I'll into my stall; 'tis broad-day now.

[Works and sings.]

Let matters of state
Disquiet the great,
The cobbler has nought to perplex him;
Has naught but his wife
To ruffle his life,
And her he can strap if she vex him.
He's out of the pow'r
Of Fortune, that whore,
Since low as can be she has thrust him;
From duns he's secure,
For, being so poor,
There's none to be found that will trust him.
Heyday, I think the jade's brain is turn'd. What, have you forgot to spin, huffy?

Lady. But I have not forgot to run. I'll e'en try my feet. I shall find somebody in the town, sure, that will succour me.

[She runs out.]

Job. What, does she run for't?—I'll after her. *[runs out.]*

SCENE Sir John's House. Nell in bed.

Nell. What pleasant dreams I have had to night! Methought I was in paradise, upon a bed of violets and

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r ses, and the sweetest husband by my side! Ha! bless me! Where am I now? What sweets are these? No garden in the spring can equal them—Am I on a bed?—The sheets are farfenet, sure; no linen ever was so fine.—What a gay, silking robe have I got—O heaven! I dream!—Yet, if this be a dream, I would not wish to wake again:—Sure, I died last night, and went to heaven, and this is it.

Enter Lucy.

Lucy. Now must I awake an alarm that will not lie still again till midnight, at soonest; the first greeting I suppose will be jade, or whore. Madam! Madam!

Nell. O Gemini! who's this? What dost say, sweetheart?

Lucy. Sweetheart! O Lud, sweetheart! the best names I have had these three months from her, have been slut or whore. What gown and ruffles will your ladyship wear to day?

Nell. What does she mean? Ladyship! gown! and ruffles!—Sure I am awake!—Oh! I remember the cunning man, now.

Lucy. Did your ladyship speak?

Nell. Ay, child, I'll wear the same I did yesterday.

Lucy. Mercy upon me!—Child! here's a miracle!

Enter Lettice.

Let. Is my lady awake?—Have you had her shoe or her slipper at your head yet?

Lucy. Oh no, I'm overjoy'd: she's in the kindest humour!—Go to the bed and speak to her—Now is your time.

Let. Now's my time! what to have another tooth beat out, Madam!

Nell. What dost say, my dear?—O father! what would she have!

Let. What work will your ladyship please to have done to-day? Shall I work plain-work, or go to my stitching?

Nell. Work, child! 'tis holiday; no work to day.

Let. Oh mercy! am I, or thee awake? or do we both dream?—Here's a blest change!

Lucy. If it continues we shall be a happy family.

Let. Your ladyship's chocolate is ready

Nell. Mercy on me! what's that! some garment I suppose. [*Aside*] Put it on then, sweetheart.

Let. Put it on—Madam! I have taken it off; 'tis ready to drink.

Nell.

Nell. I mean, put it by ; I don't care for drinking now.

Enter. Cook.

Cook. Now I go like a bear to the stake, to know her scurvy ladyship's commands about dinner. How many rascally names must I be called ?

Let. Oh, John Cook ! you'll be out of your wits to find my lady in so sweet a temper.

Cook. What a devil, are they all mad ?

Lucy. Madam, here's the cook come about dinner.

Nell. O ! there's a fine cook ! he looks like one of your gentlefolks. [*Aside*] Indeed, honest man, I'm very hungry now, pray get me, a rather upon the coals, a piece of one milk cheese, and some white bread.

Cook. Hey ! what's to do here ? my head turns round. Honest man ! I look'd for rogue and rascal, at least. She's strangely chang'd in her diet, as well as her humour. [*Aside*] I'm afraid, madam, cheese and bacon will sit very heavy on your ladyship's stomach, in a morning. If you please madam, I'll toss you up a white fricasee of chickens in a trice, madam ; or what does your ladyship think of a veal sweetbread ?

Nell. E'vn what you will, good cook.

Cook. Good cook ! good cook ! ah ! 'tis a sweet lady.

Enter Butler.

Oh ! kiss me, Chip ; I am out of my wits—We have the kindest, sweetest lady.

But. You shamming rogue, I think you are out of your wits, all of you. the maid looks merrily too.

Lucy. Here's the Butler, madam, to know your ladyship's orders.

Nell. Oh ! pray, Mr. Butler, let me have some small beer when my breakfast comes in.

But. Mr. Butler ! Mr. Butler ! I shall be turned into stone with amazement [*Aside*] Would not your ladyship rather have a glass of frontinac, or lacryme ?

Nell. O dear ! what hard names are these ; but I must not betray myself.—[*Aside*.—Well, which you please, Mr. Butler.

Enter Coachman.

But. Go, get you in, and be rejoiced as I am.

Coach. The Cook has been making his game I know not how long. What, do you banter too ?

Lucy. Madam ! the Coachman.

Coach. I come to know if your ladyship goes out to day, and which you'll have, the coach or chariot ?

Nell

Nell. Good lackaday!—I'll ride in the coach, if you please.

Coach. The sky will fall, that's certain. [Exit.]

Nell. I can hardly think I am awake yet. How well pleased they all seem to wait upon me!—Oh notable cunning man!—My head turns round!—I am quite giddy with my own happiness.

Tho' late I was a cobbler's wife,
In cottage most obscur-a,
In plain stuff gown, and short ear'd coif,
Hard labour did endur-a:

The scene is chang'd, I'm alter'd quite,
And from poor humble Nell-a,

I'll learn to dance, to read, and write,

And from all bear the bell-a: [Exit.]

Enter Sir John, meeting his servants.

But. Oh sir! here's the rarest news!

Lucy. There never was the like, sir! You'll be overjoy'd and amaz'd!

Sir John. What are you mad?—What's the matter with ye?—How now! here's a new face in my family!—What's the meaning of all this?

But. Oh, sir, the family's turned upside down! We are almost distracted; the happiest people!

Lucy. Ay, my lady, sir—my lady—

Sir John. What is she dead?

But. Dead! Heav'n forbid—O! she's the best woman; the sweetest lady!

Sir John. This is astonishing!—I must go and enquire into this wonder. If this be true, I shall rejoice indeed.

But. 'Tis true, sir, upon my honour. Long live Sir John and my lady! Huzza! *Enter Nell.*

Nell. I well remember the cunning man warned me to bear all out with confidence; or worse, he said, would follow.—I am ashamed, and know not what to do with all this ceremony! I am amazed, and out of my senses!—I look'd in the glass, and saw a gay fine thing I knew not! Methought my face was not at all like that I have seen at home in a piece of looking-glass fastened upon the cupboard. But great ladies, they say, have flattering glasses, that shew them far unlike themselves, whilst poor folks' glasses represent them e'en just as they are.

Fine ladies with an artful grace,
 Disguise each native feature;
 Whilst flatt'ring glasses shew the face,
 As made by art, not nature:
 But we poor folks in home-spun grey,
 By patch nor washes tainted,
 Look fresh and sweeter far than they
 That still are finely painted.

Lucy. Oh, madam! Here's my master just return'd
 from hunting.

Enter Sir John.

Nell. O gemini! this fine gentleman my husband!

Sir John. My dear, I am overjoy'd to see my family
 thus transported with extacy, which you occasion'd.

Nell. Sir, I shall always be proud to do every thing
 that may give you delight, or your family satisfaction.

Sir John. By heav'n! I am charm'd—dear creature,
 if thou continuest thus, I had rather enjoy thee than the
 the Indies. But can this be real?—May I believe my
 senses?

Nell. All that's good above can witness for me, I am in
 earnest.

[*Kneels.*

Sir John. Rise, my dearest. Now am I happy indeed.
 —Where are my friends, my servants? Call 'em all, and
 let them be witnesses of my happiness.

[*Exit.*

Nell. O rare sweet man! He smells all over like a
 nosegay.—Heaven preserve my wits.

O charming cunning man! thou hast been wondrous kind,
 And all thy golden words do now prove true I find;

Ten thousand transports wait

To crown my happy state;

Thus kiss'd, and press'd,

And doubly bless'd

In all this pomp and state:

New scenes of joy arise

Which fill me with surprise;

My rock, and reel,

And spinning wheel,

And husband I despise.

Then, Jobson, now adieu,

Thy cobbling still pursue;

For hence I will not, cannot, no, nor must not, buckle to.

[*Exit.*

SCENE, Jobson's house.

Enter Lady.

Lady. Was ever lady yet so miserable? I can't make
 one soul in the village acknowledge me: They sure are
 all

all of the conspiracy. This wicked husband of mine has laid a devilish plot against me; I must at present submit, that I may hereafter have an opportunity of executing my design. Here comes the rogue; I'll have him strangled: But now I must yield.

Enter Jobson.

Job. Come on, Nell, art thou come to thyself yet?

Lady. Yes, I thank you, I wonder what I ail'd; this cunning man has put powder in my drink, most certainly.

Lady. Powder! the brewer put good store of powder of malt in it, that's all. Powder, quoth she! ha, ha, ha.

Lady. I never was so in all the days of life.

Job. Was so! No; nor I hope ne'er will be so again, to put me to the trouble of strapping you so devilishly.

Lady. I'll have that right hand cut off for that, rogue.

[*Aside.*] You was unmerciful to bruise me so.

Job. Well, I'm going to Sir John Loverule's; all his tenants are invited; there's to be rare feasting and reveling, and open house kept for three months.

Lady. Husband, shan't I go with you?

Job. What the devil ails thee now!—Did I not tell thee but yesterday, I would strap thee for desiring to go; and art thou at it again, with a pox?

Lady. What does the villain mean by strapping, and yesterday? [*Aside.*]

Job. Why, I have been married but six weeks, and you long to make me a cuckold already. Stay at home and be hang'd; there's good cold pie in the cupboard, but I'll trust thee no more with strong beer, hussy. [*Exit.*]

Lady. Well, I'll not be long after you: Sure I shall get some of my own family to know me; they can't be all in this wicked plot.

SCENE. *Sir John's house.*

Sir John and company enter.

Sir John. Was ever man possess'd of
So sweet so kind a wife!

Nell. Dear sir, you make be proud:
Be you but kind,
And you shall find

All the good I can boast of,
Shall end but with my life,

Sir John. Give me thy lips;

Nell. First let me, dear sir, wipe 'em;

Sir John. Was ever so sweet a wife!

Nell. Thank you, dear sir!

[*Kissing her.*]

I vow

I vow and protest,
I ne'er was so kiss—

Again sir!

Sir John. Again, and again, my dearest;
O may it last for life!

What joy thus to enfold thee!

Nell. What pleasure to behold thee!

Inclin'd again to kiss!

Sir John. How ravishing the bliss!

Nell. I little thought this morning,

'Twould ever come to this.

Da capo.

Enter Lady.

Lady. Here's a fine rout and rioting! you sirrah, but-
let, you rogue.

But. Why how now! Who are you?

Lady. Impudent varlet! Don't you know your lady?

But. Lady! here, turn this mad woman out of doors.

Lady. You rascal—Take that, sirrah.

[Flings a glass at him.]

Foot. Have a care, hussy, there's a good pump with-
out; we shall cool your courage for you.

Lady. You, Lucy! have you forgot me too, you minx?

Lucy. Forget you, woman! Why I never remember'd
you, I never saw you before in my life,

Lady. Oh, the wicked slut! I'll give you cause to re-
member me, I will, hussy. *[Pulls her head cloaths off.]*

Lucy. Murder! Murder! Help!

Sir John. How now! What uproar's this?

Lady. You Lettice, you slut! Won't you know me nei-
ther? *Let.* Help! help!— *[Strikes her.]*

Sir John. What's to do there?

But. Why, fir, here's a madwoman calls herself my
lady, and is beating and cuffing us all round,

Sir John. *[To lady.]* Thou my wife! poor creature, I
pity thee—I never saw thee before.

Lady. Then it is in vain to expect redress from thee,
thou wicked contriver of all my misery.

Nell. How am I amazed! Can that be I, there in my
cloaths, that have made all this disturbance? And yet
I am here, to my thinking, in these fine cloaths. How
can this be? I am so confounded and affrighted, that I be-
gin to wish I was with Zekel Jobson again.

Lady. To whom shall I apply myself, or whither can
I fly? Heav'n! what do I see!—Is not that I yonder,
in

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in my gown and petticoat I wore yesterday ? How can it be ! I cannot be at two places at once.

Sir John. Poor wretch ! She's stark mad.

Lady. What, in the devil's name, was I here before I came ? Let me look in the glass.—Oh, heavens ! I am astonish'd, I don't know myself !—Is this be I that the glass shews me, I never saw myself before,

Sir John. What incoherent madness is this.

Enter Jobson.

Lady. There ; that's the devil in my likeness, who has robb'd me of my countenance. Is he here too ?

Job. Ay, hussy, and here's my strap, you quean.

Nell. O dear ! I'm afraid my husband will beat me, that am on t'other side the room there.

Job. I hope your honour will pardon her, she was drinking with a conjurer last night, and has been mad ever since, and calls herself my Lady Loverule.

Sir John. Poor woman ! take care of her ! do not hurt her ; she may be cured of this.

Job. Yes, and please your worship, you shall see me cure her presently. Hussy, do you see this ?

Nell. O ! pray, Zekel, don't beat me.

Sir John. What says my love ? Does she infect thee with madness too ?

Nell. I am not well—pray lead me in. [*ex. N. and maids.*]

Job. I beseech your worship don't take it ill of me, she shall never trouble you more.

Sir John. Take her home and use her kindly.

Lady. What will become of me ? [*Ex. J bson and Lady.*]

Enter Footman.

Foot. Sir, the doctor who call'd here last night desires you will give him leave to speak a word or two with you, upon very earnest business.

Sir John. What can this mean ? Bring him in.

Enter Doctor.

Doct. Lo ! on my knees, sir, I beg forgiveness for what I have done, and put my life into your hands.

Sir John. What mean you ?

Doct. I have exercis'd my magic art upon your lady : I know you have too much honour to take away my life, since I might still have conceal'd it, had I pleas'd.

Sir John. You have now brought me to a glimpse of misery too great to bear. Is all my happiness then turn'd into vision only ?

Doct.

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Doct. Sir, I beg you, fear not ; if any harm comes on it, I freely give you leave to hang me.

Sir John. Inform me what you have done ?

Doct. I have transform'd your lady's face so that she seems the cobbler's wife, and have charm'd her face into the likeness of my lady's : and last night when the storm arose, my spirits convey'd them to each other's bed.

Sir John. Oh, wretch ! thou hast undone me : I am fallen from the height of all my hopes, and must still be curst with a tempestuous wife, a fury whom I never knew quiet since I had her.

Doct. If that be all, I can continue the charm for both their lives.

Sir John. Let the event be what it will, I'll hang you if you do not end the charm this instant.

Doct. I will this minute, sir ; and perhaps you'll find it the luckiest of your life : I can assure you your lady will prove the better for it.

Sir John. Hold ; there's one material circumstance I'd know.

Doct. Your pleasure, sir ?

Sir John. Perhaps the cobbler has — You understand me.

Doct. I do assure you, No : For e'er she was convey'd to his bed, the cobbler was got up to work, and he has done nought but beat her ever since, and you are like to reap the fruits of his labour. He'll be with you in a minute — Here he comes.

Enter Jobson.

Sir John. So, Jobson. Where's your wife ?

Job. And please your worship, she's here at the door, but indeed I thought I had lost her just now ; for as she came into the hall, she fell into such a swoon, that I thought she would never come out on't again ; but a tweak or two by the nose, and half a dozen straps did the business at last. Here, where are you, house wife ?

Enter Lady.

[*Butler holds up the candle, but lets it fall when he sees her.*]

But. O heaven and Earth ! Is this my lady ?

Job. What does he say ? My wife chang'd to my lady !

Cook. Ay, I thought the othet was too good for our lady.

Lady. [*To Sir John.*] Sir, you are the person I have most offended, and here confess I have been the worst of

C

wives

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wives in every thing, but that I always kept myself chaste. If you can vouchsafe once more to take me to your bosom, the remainder of my days shall joyfully be spent in duty, and observance of your will.

Sir Job. Rise, madam, I do forgive you; and if you are sincere in what you say, you'll make me happier than all the enjoyments in the world without you could do.

Job. What a pox! am I to lose my wife thus?

Enter Lucy and Lettice.

Lucy. Oh, sir! the strangest accident has happened—it has amaz'd us!—My lady was in so great a swoon, we thought she had been dead.

Lett. And when she came to herself, she proved another woman.

Job. Ha, ha, ha! a bull, a bull.

Lucy. She is so chang'd, I knew her not: I never saw her face before: O lud! Is this my lady?

Lett. We shall be maul'd again.

Lucy. I thought our happiness was too great to last.

Lady. Fear not, my servants. It shall hereafter be my endeavour to make you happy.

Sir John. Persevere in this resolution, and we shall be blest indeed, for life.

Enter Nell.

Nell. My head turn's round, I must go home. O, Zekel! are you there!

Job. O lud! is that fine lady my wife! I'gad, I'm afraid to come near her. What can be the meaning of this?

Sir John. This is a happy change, and I'll have it celebrated with all the joy I proclaimed for my late short-liv'd vision.

Lady. To me 'tis the happiest day I ever knew.

Sir John. Here, Jobson, take thy fine wife.

Job. But one word, sir.—Did not you worship make a buck of me, under the rose.

Sir John. No, upon my honour, nor ever kiss her lips till I came from hunting; but since she has been a means of bringing about this happy change, I'll give thee five hundred pounds home with her; go buy a stock of leather.

Job. Brave boys! I'm a prince—The prince of cobblers! Come hither and kiss me, Nell, I'll never strap thee more.

Nell.

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Nell. Indeed, Zekel, I have been in such a dream, that I'm quit weary of it. [*To Jobson*] Forsooth, madam, will you please to take your cloaths, and let me have mine again. [*To Lady Loverule.*

Job. Hold your tongue, you fool, they'll serve you to go to church. [*Aside.*

Lady. No; thou shalt keep them, and I'll preserve thine as reliques.

Job. And can your ladyship forgive my strapping your honour so very much?

Lady. Most freely. The joy of this blessed change sets all things right again.

Sir John. Let us forget every thing that is past, and think of nothing now but joy and pleasure.

Lady. Let ev'ry face with smiles appear,

Be joy in ev'ry breast,

Since from a life of pain and care,

We now are truly blest.

Sir John. May no remembrance of past time

Our present pleasures soil,

Be nought but mirth and joy a crime,

And sporting all our toil.

Job. I hope you'll give me leave to speak,

If I may be so bold;

There's nought but the devil, and this good strap,

Could ever tame a scold.

THE END.

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